



## PLANNING & ZONING REPORT

### Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting of May 17, 2022

File # 017-22

**APPLICANTS:** City of Rockford and Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

**LOCATION:** 707 West Jefferson Street

**REQUESTED ACTION:** A Special Use Permit for a Mural on a building in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District.

**EXISTING USE:** Commercial building

**PROPOSED USES:** Commercial building with mural

**DIMENSIONS:** 264 feet by 156.09 feet. **SQUARE FOOTAGE:** 41,207 sq. ft.

#### ADJACENT ZONING AND LAND USES:

NORTH:	C-3	Parking lot, Vacant building
EAST:	C-3	General Commercial Zoning District
SOUTH:	C-3	Speedy Auto Care, Vacant commercial building, Duplex
WEST:	C-3	Pat's License Service, Single-family residences

**YEAR 2020 PLAN:** RM-C Medium Residential-Retail

**SOILS REPORT:** None

**HISTORY:** **File # 009-19:** A Special Use Permit for a building mural in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District was approved April 3, 2019 for the property located at 203 North Church Street. This property is located four (4) blocks southeast of subject property.

**File # 015-16:** A Special Use Permit for murals on a bridge in a C-4, Urban Mixed-Use Zoning District was approved on June 6, 2016 for the property located at 1XX and 102 West Jefferson Street. This property is located six (6) blocks east of the subject property.

**REVIEW COMMENTS:** The Applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for a Mural on a building in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District. Exhibit A shows that the subject property is located on the northwest corner of West Jefferson Street and North Rockton Avenue intersection. The subject property is surrounded by commercial and residential uses (Exhibit B & C).

The Applicant, in conjunction with the Rockford Area Convention & Visitor's Bureau, is proposing a Special Use Permit to allow murals. Within Section 51-010 of the Zoning Ordinance it states, "murals are allowed in the C-3 District by means of a Special Use Permit provided that positive findings of fact are made by City Council".

Exhibit D shows that the proposed location will be on the south and east sides of the building. The building wall is exposed on the south side and visible from West Jefferson Street and North Rockton Avenue.

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, (RACVB) announced in April 2022 that CRE8IV would be returning this year. CRE8IV is a community-building, arts-infused event launched in 2019 as part of RACVB's place making and public art efforts designed to enhance the region for residents and visitors. In its first year, CRE8IV artists painted nine murals in downtown Rockford. Last year, RACVB fundraised and had community support to do eight murals in Rockford and have created 24 murals throughout the Rockford region via CRE8IV since its inception. The locations that have been selected are based on visibility, location and overall pedestrian traffic. The artist for this mural will be Michael Cooper. The concept will be Trompe L'oeil style - window boxes with native flowers emerging through with sight lines to the sky above through empty spaces. Exhibit E is an example of the artist's concept on this building.

Staff supports the idea of attracting and encouraging the community in promoting murals. Murals are a growing trend and have a positive effect to the community, allowing art apprentices the opportunity to increase their knowledge and experience installing murals and organizing projects along with gaining technical abilities. Additionally, this proposal is bringing awareness of the talented artists in this community and throughout the country.

Exhibit F shows that there have been two calls for service for the Police Department in the last 24 months for 707 West Jefferson Street.

Staff feels that this mural will enhance the surrounding area and feels the Applicant's proposed request is reasonable and recommends approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of a Special Use Permit for a Mural on a building in a C-3, General Commercial Zoning District, subject to the following conditions:

1. Submittal of mural elevation and placement of mural on building for Staff's review and approval prior to installation.
2. A sign permit shall be required including an illustration of the proposed artwork shall be submitted with the permit application.
3. The mural panels may not consist of a vinyl banner material within a frame.
4. The mural must be maintained to meet code.

See attached findings of fact.

SC: DM 05/6/2022

**FINDINGS OF FACT FOR APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT**  
**FOR A MURAL**  
**IN A C-3, GENERAL COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT**  
**LOCATED AT 707 WEST JEFFERSON STREET**

**Approval** of this Special Use Permit is based upon the following findings:

1. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use Permit will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare of the community.
2. The Special Use Permit will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, and will not substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.
3. The establishment of the special use will not impede the normal or orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.
4. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or necessary facilities have been, are being, or will be provided.
5. Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress or egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.
6. The special use shall conform to the applicable regulations of the C-3 District in which it is located.



Exhibit A  
707 West Jefferson Street  
SUP  
#017-22

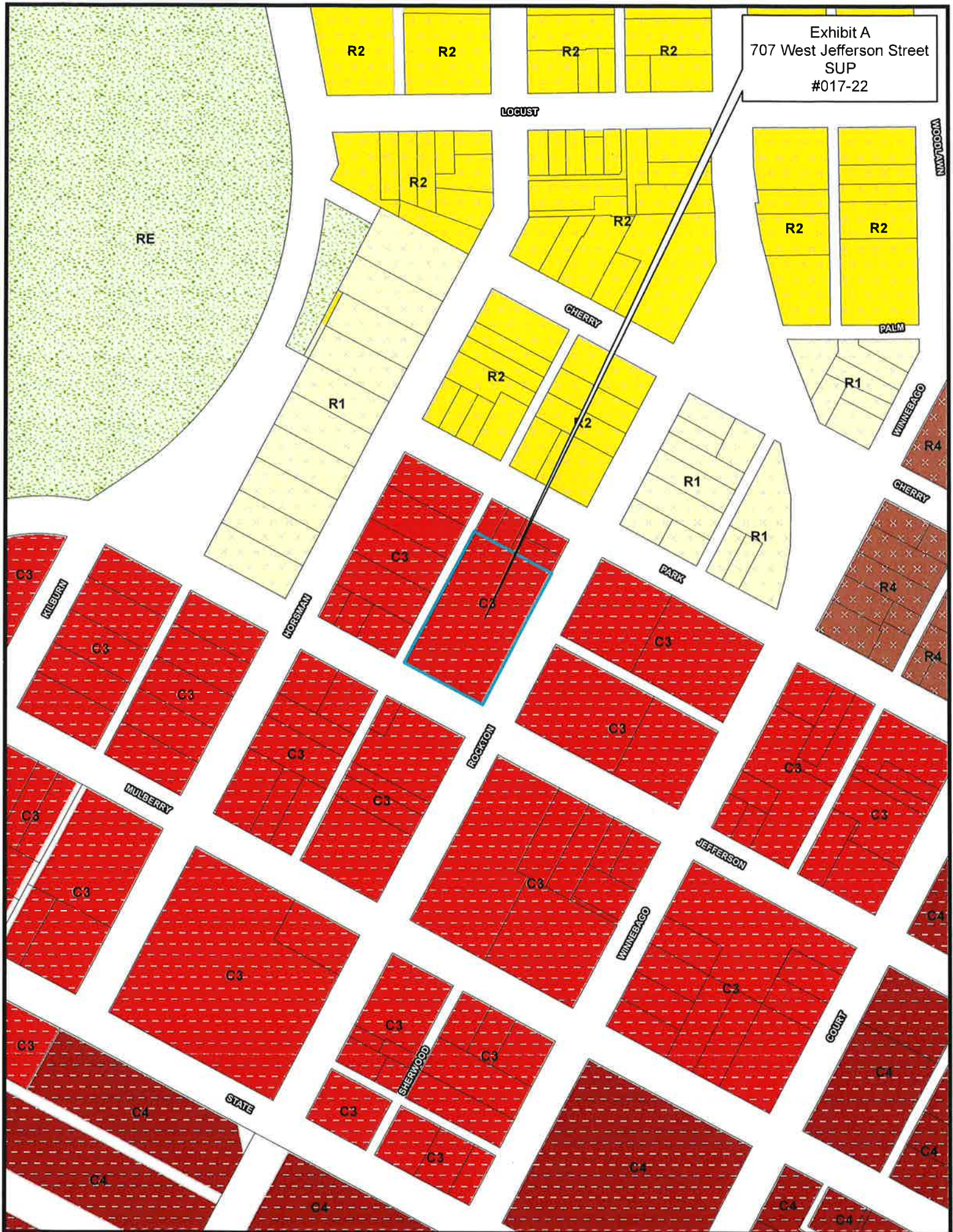






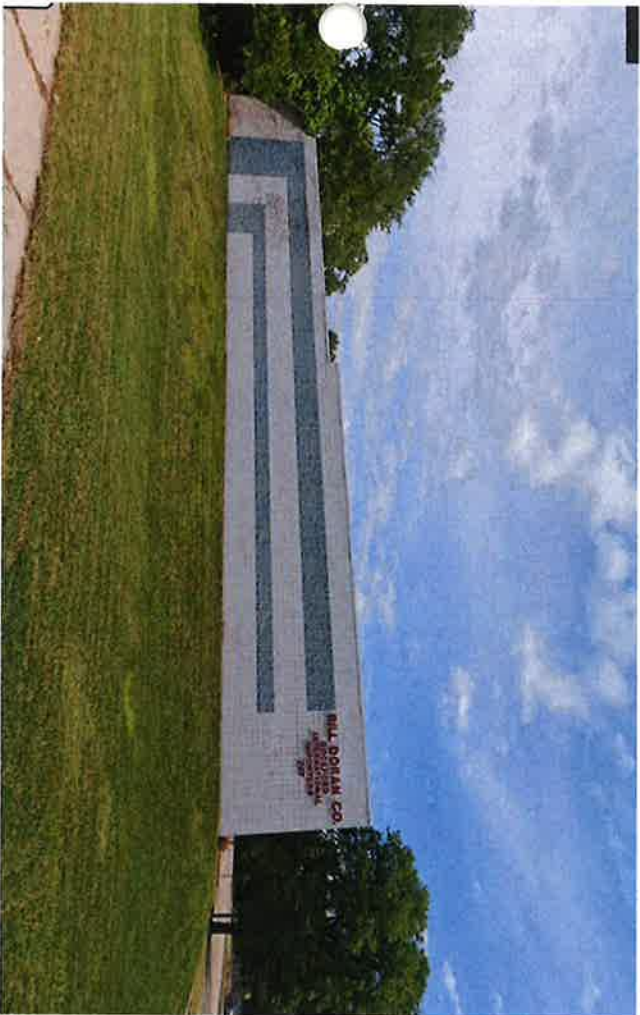


Exhibit C  
707 West Jefferson Street  
SUP  
#017-22

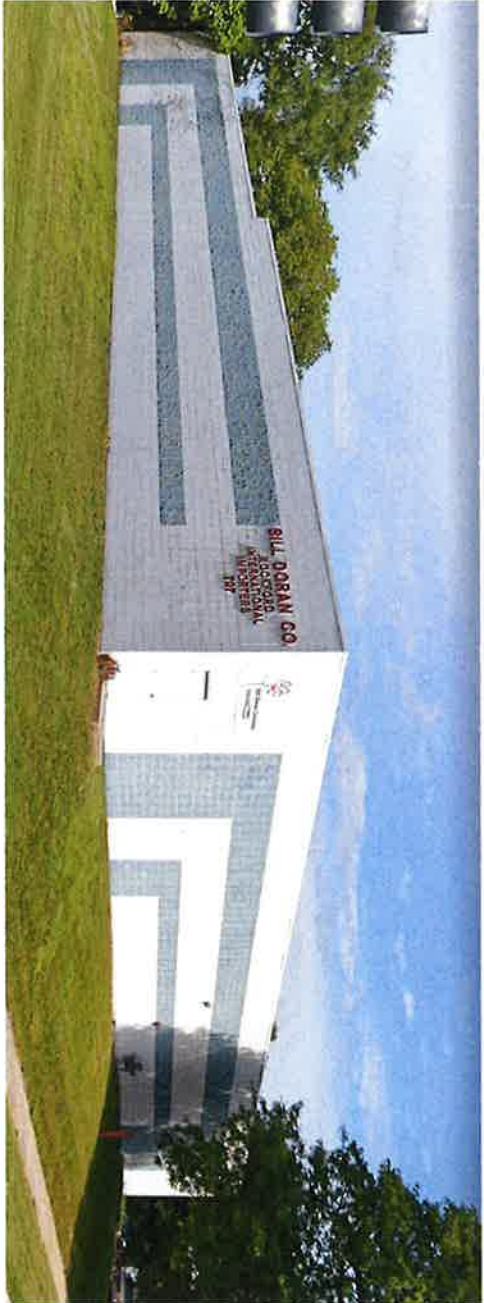




Exhibit D  
707 West Jefferson Street  
SUP  
#017-22



707 W. Jefferson St.  
South facing & East facing



**Wall:** Bill Doran Company; 707 W. Jefferson St. (Corner – South and East facing)

**Artist:** Michael Cooper

**Concept:** Trompe L'oeil style – windows boxes with native flowers emerging through with sight lines to the sky above through empty spaces

\* wall concept





Call Number	Event Date	Location	Situation Reported	Call Disposition	Agency
20-052796	2020-10-18T11:50:36	707 W Jefferson St	ALARM - BURGLAR	0001 - FALSE ALARM - SUB ERROR / 0001 - FALSE ALARM - SUB ERROR	Rockford Police Department
20-019989	2020-09-06T11:26:05	707 W Jefferson St	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	NRPT - NO REPORT / NRPT - NO REPORT	Rockford Police Department

Exhibit F  
707 West Jefferson Street  
SUP  
#017-22